

**ABSTRACT**

A direct smelting plant for producing molten metal from a metalliferous feed material is disclosed. The plant  
5 includes a fixed smelting vessel to hold a molten bath of metal and slag and a gas space above the bath. The plant also includes means for supplying solids and gas feed materials to the vessel and for tapping molten material from the vessel. The plant also includes at least two  
10 platforms for supporting plant operators at different heights of the vessel. The metal tapping means and the slag tapping means are located so as to be accessible by plant operators on a cast house platform and the end metal tapping means and the end slag tapping means are located to  
15 be accessible by plant operators on an end tap platform that is at a lower height than the cast house platform.